

## PHIL 499 – Bachelor’s Essay

**Statement of Purpose:** The Bachelor’s Essay is a year-long research and writing project carrying six (6) hours of credit. It is normally taken during the senior year under the close guidance of the supervising professor. It is required for students in the Honors College, and is recommended for students who are applying to graduate school in philosophy or who desire a challenging culmination to their undergraduate experience.

The subject of the Bachelor’s Essay must be appropriate for a substantial research project. Typically, the essay will be 35-50 pages, though the exact length of the essay will necessarily vary. Students should begin work on the Bachelor’s Essay with a well-defined topic so they can investigate their subject thoroughly. During the Fall semester, the student should meet regularly with the supervisor to discuss their progress and to clarify and refine the topic. Writing should not be postponed until the Spring; rather, students should begin writing early and should submit drafts of sections to the supervisor for critical review periodically throughout the year. A complete draft must be submitted to the tutor by April 10, including a 1-2 page abstract for distribution to department faculty. The final copy must be submitted to the tutor by May 1. The student will present and defend the essay at the annual Philosophy Student Research Colloquium. Bachelor’s Essays are catalogued and retained in the collection of the College library.

**Procedure:** Normally, the student initiates the process by proposing a topic to the prospective supervisor. If the supervisor agrees that the topic is appropriate, the student and mentor will work out a plan of study. If you are unsure who might supervise your project, consult with the department chair or your advisor.

**Proposal:** Once you and the supervisor have worked out a plan of study, sign this form, complete the “Application for Individual Enrollment” (available through the tutor), and prepare a 1-2 page project description, including:

- the topic to be studied;
- the plan of study (How often will the student meet with the supervisor? How will the study be organized?);
- a brief explanation of how the grade will be determined; and
- a tentative reading list.

**Pre-requisites:** Senior standing, Philosophy major, overall GPA of at least 3.25, approval by supervisor and the department.

**Deadline:** Due April 15 of student’s junior year. This deadline is in place to allow time for faculty to review the proposal. Although the deadline may be extended for extenuating circumstances, understand that a late proposal will bias the department against the project. Independent research requires organization and discipline; if the student is not sufficiently organized to meet the deadline, it is natural to worry that s/he is not sufficiently organized to successfully complete the project.

Please attach the proposal to this form and sign at the bottom.

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Student

Date